

Cardinal Sandoval Homily at IV World Ultreya, August 1, 2009

My Dear Cursillista Brothers and Sisters:

When I did the Cursillo in 1958, 51 years ago, one thing surprised me greatly, very positively. As a young priest, after a year of being ordained, I was invited to do the Cursillo. I went in on Thursday afternoon, and got out on Sunday evening. I knew nothing about Cursillo; but I was working on my doctoral thesis in Spain, and they invited me... And I went! The joy that was in all of them profoundly caught my attention. It was not only in the leaders, the “rollistas” (who did very well), but in those who finished their Cursillo. They felt liberated, a load was lifted from them. They were surprised in the face of God’s Grace, God’s Mercy, and his generous forgiveness. The Joy in Christ was notable!

And I think that the characteristic of the cursillista must be a profound joy. Not that of the world. It is not of the world. It is the joy that is in Christ our Lord. That joy was announced when Christ was coming into the world. The angel told Zachariah, the father of the precursor “there will be great joy in the world. I bring a great joy for the world.” And to the shepherds the night of the Nativity, “I announce to you a great joy, the Savior is born.” A Christian should carry a profound joy in his heart, otherwise he’s not Christian. It is a joy in Christ, our Lord, that makes him happy and makes him an Apostle.

Our Holy Father Benedict, when he was Cardinal Ratzinger, in a book called “Salt of the Earth” (I recommend it to you, it’s still current), said “the joy that is not shared, is not joy.” No one who’s happy and glad... No one who’s happy & glad remains silent.” He says it, he communicates it, he carries it everywhere. And if you have found Christ... If he has forgiven you, not only at the Cursillo first, but throughout all your life, again and again... Practicing what he told St. Peter, up to 70 times 7...” If you’ve enjoyed the mercy of Christ our Lord, you ought to be happy, very grateful and confident. Because the one who started this good work, of Salvation, will bring it to completion. Those he pre-destined in advance, he called, he crucified, sanctified & beatified. The chain of benefits of Christ our Lord’s infinite mercy, for us the chosen.

Who is ...a true cursillista? One who is joyful, but in Christ,... who communicates the joy to the others. A true cursillista is one that is, and continues to be in love with the Lord. Therefore, he continues united to Christ our Lord. United in the faith-- he believes

in Him. United in love--he loves Him. United in service & obedience to Christ our Lord. And that christian life ought to be maintained with God's Grace, because it's not of man.

How many have made the Cursillo, and how many have persevered, and how many have not persevered. They were called, they were made participants of this Grace, but then, they cooled down, they strayed away and went back to their previous life. Every cursillista must live on the Eucharist and confession.

The readings today invite us. The Lord invites us to come close to this heavenly Bread, to the new Manna. In the dessert, God gave manna to his people, but they died. Christ our Lord is the Manna descended from heaven that our Heavenly Father sends us. And those who eat it **Live**. And Live eternally.

You cannot be a Christian, cannot be in reality a Cursillista, if you don't live on the Eucharist. And to live on the Eucharist, to receive it with dignity, fruitfully, you need also the Sacrament of Confession. You must frequently go to this Tribunal of Mercy, that is penance.

The true Cursillista, because he loves Christ, loves the church. Loves the Body of Christ our Lord, not with a Platonic love--a concrete love, a love that is commitment with the church, communion with the church, with today's church spread throughout the world, with his vicar, his bishops, priests and all its faithful. A church that has big projects, in order to respond to big concerns. And the cursillista cannot live oblivious to those concerns of the church. And you know very well what those concerns are. The situation of the family and Life is very grave.

The church is constantly calling to take action to defend the family, divine institution & the fundamental nuclei of society and the Church--work of God. To defend the family against divorce, free unions, etc. etc. There is a constant attack against the family... And the Church, in obedience to God's plan, to God's Word, defends the family.

The cursillista must be with life, as the Church is with Life. No abortion!.. No contraception!.. No euthanasia!.. And other things that exist in this world today, that are so very far from God, searching for their own paths, without the Lord.

The love for the Church is communion. We make the Body of Christ. We are members of that mysterious organism. He is the Head, we are the members... With many gifts,

charisms and ministries. To each one God gives his; but they are for the good of the whole Body.

The cursillista cannot be a self centered individual who lives his Christian life privately, looking for his own salvation, without worrying about the salvation of others. Because the Lord wants disciples – **yes**; but He also wants Missionaries. To those whom He called, like St. Mark, the Evangelist: “He called to be with Him so as to send them.”

Christ’s public life began with the same word “**come**” and ended with the word “**Go**” throughout the world. “Take the Gospel to all nations.” The Lord has called you in a very special way, when He brought you to the Cursillo... “**Come!**”

You’ve known Him. You’ve enjoyed Him. He has illuminated your life, He has filled your heart with Peace; but The Lord is telling you “GO now...” “**Go!**”

If this second part is missing, the “**Go**”, you are not complying with the Lord. Disciples, and Missionaries, in Love with Christ, but committed to His Kingdom, to the evangelization, with the witness in the world to bring the Gospel as a leaven everywhere.

Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI has gifted us his third Encyclical (it was recently published) “Caritas in Veritate.” The Holy Father fundamentally wants to give us the understanding in this Encyclical, that we must concern ourselves with God’s presence in the world, in the realities of our time, that He might be in the economy, in education, in the sciences & the arts. The world economic crisis we are suffering... Is due to what? There haven’t been droughts, there haven’t been earthquakes, there haven’t been plagues, there haven’t been wars, and we are in crisis. Why? Because of a lack of morality! Because the great money lords have come to say “*the economy has its laws, the economy has its laws.*” We already know that those laws are: the laws of profit, the laws of earning without any moral vision.

And it is not so. Everything that man does, being a **FREE BEING**, God’s image... Everything man does ought to be subject to morality. It must be under the laws of morality to **be** a human work and a good work, and good for all.

We **cannot**, therefore, be indifferent to the world’s matters, cease being leaven and light.

And let’s start with Grace! Cursillo is a lay movement. Lay people have families... How Christian do those families live? Lay people have businesses, companies... How do they conduct them? With the criterion of the Gospel,...or the criterion of the economy? They engage in politics... and they should engage in politics... Very well said our Pope

in the Encyclical, “the Church does not make politics, **no**, but Christians do... Because they are citizens, and they should make politics Christian.

The commitment of the Kingdom of God is with Christ our Lord, which has called us... Yes, to make us happy, and take us to Heaven; but deserving of it! Doing His work, giving testimony, and taking Him everywhere.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning...Joy... The believer’s joy, the cursillista’s joy is something very important, above all, for this sad world. If you look at the faces of the populations who have no faith, they are not happy faces, they are sad faces. AND they try to disguise the sadness with lots of fun, much entertainment; but in their heart they do not carry light, because they do not have a window to the future. And the joy of believers, the happiness they notice in us is a witness to the faith, on *behalf* of Christ, our Lord.

May Jesus Christ, who is with us in this Holy Mystery we celebrate, win over our heart now and forever. May He make us **His** disciples and **His** Apostles.

And May the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of our Lord, who begot Him and gave Him to us, also be in the devotion and in the hear of each cursillista. She is Mother of Grace and Mercy and the guarantee of our Salvation.

So be it!